



New American Girl doll

ORANGEBURGERS AND FRIES, A10

Warming Hearts and Souls



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EARTHA KITT ■ 1927 ~ 2008



Kitt at the Broadhurst Theatre in New York on March 6, 2008.

Catwoman, 'Santa Baby' singer dies

By POLLY ANDERSON Associated Press Writer

NEW YORK — Eartha Kitt, the sultry singer, dancer and actress who rose from South Carolina cotton fields to become an international symbol of elegance and sensuality, has died, a family spokesman said. She was 81.

Kitt, who was recently treated at Columbia Presbyterian Hospital, died Thursday in Connecticut of colon cancer, Andrew Freedman said.

Kitt, a self-proclaimed "sex kitten" famous for her catlike purr, was one of America's most versatile performers, winning two Emmys and nabbing a third nomination. She also was nominated for several Tonys and two Grammys.

Her career spanned six decades, from her start as a dancer with the famed Katherine Dunham troupe to cabarets and acting and singing on stage, in movies and on television. She persevered through an unhappy childhood as a mixed-race daughter of the South and made headlines in the 1960s for denouncing the Vietnam War during a visit to the White House.

Through the years, Kitt remained a picture. See KITT, A3



North native Eartha Kitt arrives at Clafin University in this 1997 file photo. The world-famous entertainer said she left South Carolina in tears, "but it seems I've come home to love."



Eartha Kitt poses as Catwoman for the television show "Batman" in this 1967 file photo.



Eartha Kitt is interviewed by Boo Sheppard during her 1997 visit to Orangeburg County.

Kitt left hometown of North 'in tears,' returned in triumph

By PHIL SARATA T&D Staff Writer

A native of North who left for New York City at the age of 8, entertainer Eartha Kitt reconnected with her South Carolina roots a decade before her death.

Some residents of the Orangeburg County town where Kitt was born remember the visit 11 years ago by the woman who gained international acclaim as a dancer, singer and actress.

Then-mayor Neal Livingston honored Kitt with the key to the city during the visit.

"She had a bad feeling about

her childhood," Livingston said. "But she was a real lady. We gave her the key to the city after a little ceremony and she was able to see some of her old friends and family. She was real nice to us and sent the town a nice letter afterwards."

"Everyone in North was proud of what she had accomplished and so was I. She went up there and did well. I told her that, too, even though we didn't have a real one-on-one talk."

Beverly Jamison, daughter of late North council member Sybil Jamison, who presented Kitt

See ROOTS, A3

Back in the black

Bamberg 2 erases deficit, has \$1.1M in the bank

By PHIL SARATA T&D Staff Writer

DENMARK — After experiencing a fund balance deficit of \$162,000 more than two years ago, Bamberg School District 2 officials announced the figure is now in the black in excess of \$1.1 million.

Superintendent Dr. Secaida Howell says the positive fund balance is the result of a number of cost-saving initiatives.

"We never want to operate at a deficit again, and we don't want to tap into the fund balance if it's not necessary," Howell said. "Even so, we might have to consider using some of this new fund balance to shore up areas of instruction in the not-too-distant future. While we are not yet at the point of having to furlough administrators, class sizes may need to be larger. But nothing except more state cuts is certain yet."

Howell said the turnaround is remarkable for a small, rural school district, especially in tough economic times. He noted the Denmark-Olar district's progress during the last two years was recognized as a Bright Star in the "Hallway of Hope" by the S.C. Council on Economic Education in its Winter 2008 publication, "For What It's Worth."

Rodney Anderson, district director of business operations, said, "We have never had a fund balance this high. The highest it has ever gotten is around a little over one half million dollars." Anderson also noted that in past years with a low and negative fund balance, the district administration would be on pins and needles when it came time to process payroll and accounts payable.

A school district's fund balance represents the budget's total assets minus its liabilities, according to a release issued by Bamberg School District 2. The board itself determines the fund balance amounts to be retained for contingency or "rainy day" needs or used to fund expenditures of the next fiscal year.

The release noted that an appropriate fund balance can help the district avoid excessive short-term borrowing, thereby avoiding associated interest costs; accumulate sufficient assets to make designated purchases or cover unforeseen expenditure needs and, by demonstrating financial stability, preserve or enhance the bond rating, which

See SCHOOLS, A3

Recession can't diminish spirit of Christmas season

By LEE TANT T&D Staff Writer

Laura Strickland got her best Christmas gift long before the holiday season even began. It was when she gave birth to her first child, Landon, nearly a year ago.

On Thursday, Strickland got to experience her first Christmas as a mother.

"It was really good. It was so much fun. I got to see his expressions," she said.

She did note there were fewer gifts under the Christmas tree this year due to the economy. But Strickland and others agree the recession did nothing to dim the spirit of the holiday season.

Orangeburg resident Carlisa

Markets, A9

- Gift cards lose their luster
Amazon orders up 17%

Friday believes in the "it's the thought that counts" philosophy when buying her gifts.

"The family was happy, so I was," she said.

Jeremiah Elmore worked three jobs to be able to buy his family nice presents.

"I haven't seen smiles like that in a long time. ... I was able to bless other people," he said.

James Smith watched the hordes of shoppers as he relaxed on a bench.

He got more presents than he expected. One of them, a digital camcorder, helped create lasting memories for Smith.

He used it to record his 101-year-old grandmother, Virginia, singing gospel songs.

"Overall, it was a pretty good success," Smith said.

Pamela Salters of Orangeburg was browsing at some digital cameras yesterday afternoon. She said going through all the hoopla and commercialism associated with Christmas is worth it because of family.

"As long as you have the ones you love with you, that's the most important thing," she said.

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People line up at the Wal-Mart customer service desk Friday. The day after Christmas is typically a busy day for exchanging and returning gifts.

CHRISTOPHER HUFF/T&D

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Please recycle this paper. The Times and Democrat recycles newsprint.



TODAY IN THE T&D

WEATHER

Today, clearing. High in the lower 70s.

Tonight, clouds return. Low in the upper 50s.

Sunday, partly sunny then mostly cloudy. 20 percent chance of showers. High in the mid 70s.



Expanded forecasts, B5

Get up-to-date AccuWeather temperature readings for Orangeburg all day and night at TheTandD.com.

DEATHS

- Emily "Bootsy" Anderson ~ Elloree
Aiden Christian Anthony Baird ~ Orangeburg
Thomas D. Burris ~ Elloree
Mildred Ellis ~ Sumter
Mrs. Mary N. Rose Fernandes ~ Orangeburg
Thomas Golson ~ St. Matthews
George H. Griffin ~ Holly Hill
Wilson Birnell Gruber ~ St. George
Elijah "Sonny" Huggins ~ Germantown, Md.
James E. Kirton ~ Holly Hill
Norman Anderson Linder ~ Orangeburg
Edwards McDaniel ~ St. George
James L. "Jobie" Williams ~ Neeses



PUNCTUALITY

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